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**Safe School Ambassadors ® Family Group Meeting**  
**Middle / High School Agendas**  
(Grade 6-12)

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**Goal: Promote cohesion and set tone for future meetings**

**Prep:**

Make copies of Code of Conduct (attached) - 1 per Ambassador (also available in Student Guidebooks)

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 10 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance (can be taken during the game).
- Initiate the game Telephone, see directions attached.

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 10 min.**

- Check-in with your Ambassadors
  - Ask how they have been doing since the training and facilitate a brief discussion around their answers.
- Sign Code of Conduct with all Ambassadors
  - Have an Ambassador pass out a Code of Conduct, one per participant. Invite a few students to read the Code out loud and ask the group to popcorn answers for what it means to them.
  - Have students sign at the bottom if they agree.
  - Acknowledge that some students may not be interested in staying in the SSA program, and they can speak with you after the meeting to discuss.

**Closing – 5 min.**

- Bring the meeting to a close by inviting Ambassadors into a circle and sending a “Closure Question” around the circle, see directions attached.

## Telephone

Materials: 1 piece of paper and a pen

Timing: 5-10 minutes

Preparation: Arrange chairs in a circle, one per participant

Someone volunteers to be the Starter and whispers a full sentence to the person sitting to their right.

That person then passes the message on by whispering it in the ear of the person to the right.

Each person then whispers what he or she heard into the ear of the person sitting to the right until the message ends up back at the Starter.

The last person says the (usually much distorted) message out loud and then the Starter reveals the original message.

Debrief Questions:

- Why do rumors get started? Why do they spread so easily?
- Have you ever been the subject of gossip? How did that feel?
- Have you ever spread gossip about someone else? How did you feel about it?
- What actions can Ambassadors use to stop the spread of gossip?

## Closure Questions

Materials: none

Timing: 5 minutes

Preparation: Arrange chairs in a circle, one per participant

Gather the group back into the starting circle and ask them to respond (in turn or "popcorn style") to questions like:

- What did you learn, value, or appreciate in our meeting?
- How did this meeting motivate you as an Ambassador?
- What Ambassador skills do you want to sharpen or improve?
- What Ambassador Actions do you feel most prepared to use?
- Are you ready to make one commitment as an Ambassador? If yes, what is it?

## Safe School Ambassador Code of Conduct

As a Safe School Ambassador, I agree to follow the rules and policies of the Safe School Ambassadors Program, my school, district, and community. I understand the following and accept them as my personal Code of Conduct.

1. I will look for and will notice acts of mistreatment, cruelty, and violence.
2. When I notice these things, I will do my best to use my Ambassador Actions.
3. I will show respect toward the people I am helping and to my fellow Safe School Ambassadors.
4. I will talk to my Family Group Facilitator or other adult when I learn about possible violence, abuse, or suicide.
5. When I am unsure about what to do, I will talk with my Family Group Facilitator or another adult SSA Program leader and agree to follow the guidance they offer.
6. I will attend all regular meetings of my Family Group.
7. I will complete and turn in Action Logs when due.
8. I will do my best to attend all Safe School Ambassador trainings. When I have a conflict I can't avoid, I will notify my Family Group Facilitator.
9. I will not misuse or take advantage of my position as a Safe School Ambassador to manipulate or get special treatment.
10. I understand that I could be dismissed from the Safe School Ambassadors Program for violating this Code of Conduct.

I understand the duties of being a Safe School Ambassador. I understand the consequence of violating this Code of Conduct. In the spirit of mutual trust, respect, and in good faith, we the undersigned agree to honor and be true to this Code of Conduct.

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, on this \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.  
(city) (state) (day) (month) (year)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Safe School Ambassador

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of School

\_\_\_\_\_  
SSA Program Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

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**Goal: Review core components of Safe School Ambassador Program**

**Prep: 15 Minutes in Advance:**

Get the “Jeopardy” board from the tool kit website and get familiar with the PowerPoint.

- Or, you can write up “Jeopardy” board (see directions and example attached)
  - Suggestion: Ask a few students to help

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 5 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and taking attendance (can be taken during the game).
- Initiate a game of Pass the Pulse, see directions attached.

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 20 min.**

- Play a round of Ambassador “Jeopardy”, see directions attached.
  - Prebuilt power point deck:
    - <https://tools.community-matters.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2023/03/FGF-Ambassador-Jeopardy.pptx>
  - Suggestion: Have students lead this activity
  - Point out that this version of “Jeopardy” is Ambassador “Jeopardy”!

**Closing - 2 min.**

- Bring meeting to a close by inviting students to share an Ambassador Action they did in the last week.
  - If any student is struggling to recall an Action, encourage them to record an incident of mistreatment they witnessed even if they didn’t intervene.  
\*Remember, noticing is the first step of being an Ambassador!
  - If time allows, encourage the group to brainstorm on ways the Ambassador could intervene in that situation next time.

## Pass the Pulse

Materials: A stopwatch (optional)

Timing: 5-10 minutes

Preparation:

Participants stand in a circle, choose a leader, a starter, and a timekeeper

Instruct the students to stand in a circle and hold hands. With one person chosen to be the starter, explain that they will gently squeeze the hand of the person on their left (or right). Once that person feels the squeeze, they then “pass the pulse” around the circle, until the pulse is felt by the starter and they say “STOP!” Continue playing with a new starter and incorporate the following variations as time allows.

If there is a student who would like to be the timekeeper, invite them to hold the stopwatch and time the group. Then encourage the group to try to beat their own time.

Variations include:

- Invite the group to close their eyes.
- Invite the group to send the pulse in one direction, and then when it arrives back at the starter, they must send it back the other direction. Time these rounds and see if they can beat their own time.
- Break the group up into two separate circles and have them see which group can pass the pulse the quickest.

Debrief:

- How was that? What made you successful?
- How does this relate to being an Ambassador?
  - Ideas might include: Starting with self, spreading kindness and knowing it will come back to you, working together as Ambassadors to make the school a happier and safer place, building connection and friendship among the Ambassadors.

## Ambassador “Jeopardy”

**Materials:** White board, marker, list of questions (see below)

**Timing:** 20 minutes

**Preparation:** Set up the white board with five columns (categories) and five rows. Put name of category at the top of each row. In each column starting in the first box, write 100. In the next box down, write 200, etc. up to 500.

You will need a list of questions (see below) for each category with the questions becoming increasingly more difficult as the point value increases. You will need a total of 25 questions (5 from each category).

Sample Board:

Targets, Aggressors, and Bystanders	Mistreatment and Cruelty	Ambassador Job	PREMO (acronym for “checking out” the situation)	Getting Help
100	100	100	100	100
200	200	200	200	200
300	300	300	300	300
400	400	400	400	400
500	500	500	500	500

Divide your Ambassadors into three teams. Have the team determine the order in which they will answer questions (e.g., Susie, then Bobby, then...).

Pick a spot in the room for the “contestants” to stand and then have the first students from each team stand together. Choose one team to start. That person chooses the category and amount. Read the question for that box. Contestants raise their hands if they know the answer. Choose the contestant that raised their hand first. If they get it right, their group gets the points listed in the square, if they get it wrong, their group gets negative points. Then call up the next three contestants. The winning group gets to pick the next category and amount. Continue until you have covered all of the boxes.

### Debrief:

You can ask the group who the winner is, and eventually the group or you will share that the true winner is the school, receiving the benefit of the Ambassadors’ knowledge and dedication.

## Ambassador “Jeopardy”

<b>Targets, Aggressors, and Bystanders</b>	<b>Mistreatment and Cruelty</b>	<b>Ambassador Job</b>	<b>PREMO (acronym for “checking out” the situation)</b>	<b>Getting Help</b>
What do you call the person who gets hurt? <i>(target)</i>	With what type of mistreatment does the target feel left out? <i>(exclusion)</i>	As an Ambassador, you must first ____ acts of mistreatment. <i>(notice)</i>	What does the “P” in PREMO stand for? <i>(What is the Problem?)</i>	Name 1 situation where you should get help from an adult.
What do you call the person who does the hurting? <i>(aggressor)</i>	With what type of mistreatment does the target get their feelings hurt? <i>(put downs)</i>	After you notice something and before you act, you must stop and _____. <i>(think)</i>	What does the “R” in PREMO stand for? <i>(What is my Relationship to the people involved?)</i>	Name 1 (a different) situation where you should get help from an adult.
What do you call the people who watch the hurting? <i>(bystanders)</i>	When intimidation happens, the target feels...? <i>(afraid)</i>	After you act, you should _____. <i>(follow through)</i>	What does the “E” in PREMO stand for? <i>(Environment – Who’s Around?)</i>	Name 1 reason why it might be hard to come forward.
When using the Action of Supporting, who do you usually talk to (target, aggressor or bystander?) <i>(target)</i>	Acts against campus affect who? <i>(everyone)</i>	With whom do you start doing your job first? <i>(self)</i>	What does the “M” in PREMO stand for? <i>(What’s my Mood?)</i>	Name 1 reason why it is a good idea to get help.
When using the action of Reasoning, who do you talk to? <i>(aggressor)</i>	Physical mistreatment or violence involves unwanted what? <i>(contact)</i>	Why is it risky to start with people that you hardly know at all? <i>(they might not listen, get mad, etc.)</i>	What does the “O” in PREMO stand for? <i>(What are my Options?)</i>	Name 1 adult that you could go to for help.

\*Preloaded slides on Program toolkit website

MIDDLE / HIGH



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**Goal: Start Action Snapshot Campaign**

**Prep:**

Prepare copies of Action Logs, one per Ambassador.

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 10 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance (can be taken during the game).
- **Play** a round of Who is the Leader, see directions attached.

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 15 min.**

- Introduce the Ambassadors to the Action Logs and explain the importance of Data Collection/Action Snapshot Campaign. Explain that during the Campaign, Ambassadors will be expected to record each of their interventions using the paper Action Log.
- Have Ambassadors act out an example of mistreatment (use post-its or examples from discussions) and an Ambassador intervention and then fill out an Action Log together.
- Give each Ambassador several copies of the Action Log and let them know where they can get more.
  - Ask them to fill out Action Logs until the next FG meeting. Ambassadors should turn in their logs to you at the next meeting.

MIDDLE / HIGH

**Closing – 2 min.**

- Bring meeting to a close by gathering in a circle and pass a talking piece around having everyone answer:
  1. What's your favorite dessert?
  2. What's your favorite tv show?

## Who is the Leader?

Materials: None

Timing: 10 minutes

Preparation: None

### Who's the Leader?

**Summary:** One person tries to guess who is leading the group (i.e. changing the "movement" - like winking or clapping - that all are doing). Sharpens observation skills.

**Materials:** None

**Directions:** The object of the game is for one player – The Guesser – to leave the room while the rest of the group decides on a Secret Leader. The Guesser comes back in and tries to find out who is leading the group, the Secret Leader.

- Ask for a volunteer to be the Guesser who then leaves the room.
- When a Secret Leader has been chosen, the group stands in a circle.
- The Secret Leader initiates a movement like clapping, jumping, moving hips, shrugging shoulders, winking, etc. The rest of the group members imitate the Secret Leader, while trying not to reveal who it is (e.g., without staring at the Secret Leader).
- The Guesser is called back in and stands in the middle of the circle while the rest of the group follows the Secret Leader as s/he changes to a new movement. All the players who stayed in the room try not to reveal whom they are following, and the leader tries not to reveal that he or she is leading.
- The Guesser tries to name the Secret Leader within three guesses. If they can guess who it is, then he or she chooses another player to leave the room.

**Variation:** You may have players pair up and leave the room and then come back into the middle of the circle and guess together. They can work together on guessing. Unless you have more than 9 or 10 people, they should still only use 3 guesses.

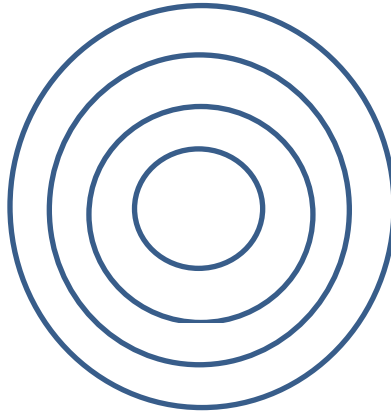
### Debrief:

- How did it feel to be the Secret Leader?
- How did it feel to be the Guesser?
- What were some clues to who the leader was?
- How did the players try to "trick" those who were guessing?

**Goal: Equip Ambassadors to take action effectively and safely.**

**Prep: 5 Minutes in Advance:**

1. Draw 4 concentric circles on a flip chart or white board. See below.
2. Make copies of With Whom Do You Start Worksheet
3. Gather supplies: beach ball or balloon, markers, and white board or flip chart.



**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 10 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance (can be taken during the game).
- Collect and discuss Action Logs completed since last meeting and provide to Program Advisor. If your Action Snapshot Campaign is still in progress, check-in with Ambassadors and ensure there are adequate Action Logs available, and Ambassadors continue to record their interventions.
- Initiate a game of Bloop, see directions attached.

**Ambassador Skill Development – 15 min.**

- Check-in with your Ambassadors: *“How have you been doing since our last meeting?”*
- **Skill Development:** With Whom Do You Start? See directions attached.
  - This is to help develop Balancing skills.

**Closing - 2 min.**

- To close the meeting, thank the ambassadors for their time, and reinforce that you are there to support them.

# Bloop

Materials: A balloon or beach ball

Timing: 5-10 minutes

Preparation: Blow up the balloon or beach ball

Everyone holds hands and must keep holding them until the end of the game.

The goal is to keep the balloon in the air using one or more of the following directions. These are called out by the leader at the start and can be changed during the game.

- Heads and shoulders
- Heads only
- Hands (while still holding hands)
- Knees and feet

The challenge can be given to keep the balloon up for 21 consecutive hits or another number of your choosing. Or the group can set the challenge for themselves.

**Debrief:** Have a group discussion

- What was the mood of your group during this activity?
- It is possible to have fun and accomplish something?
- How well did you work together? Did you notice any leaders in the group?
- What was challenging about it?

## With Whom Do You Start

**Materials:** White board or flip chart and markers, copies of the worksheet (next page) for each student

**Timing:** 20 minutes

**Preparation:** Draw 4 concentric circles on flipchart or white board and place in front of the room

Direct the Ambassadors attention to the four circles on the chart. Ask an Ambassador to come up to the chart, and through suggestions by other Ambassadors, fill in the name/group of people associated with each circle, (first circle is "Self," second circle is "Friends/Family," third circle is "Classmates" and fourth is "Anyone else"). Review each group and why Ambassadors start in the middle then work their way out.

Invite two new Ambassadors to come up and use a **red** marker to write in examples of mistreatment the Ambassadors have noticed in the past few weeks. The scribes will be writing these examples in the corresponding circles, for example if an Ambassador saw their mom yelling at their little sister, it would be put in the circle "Friends/Family." Encourage the group to come up with 8-10 examples involving various groups, i.e. self, friends/family, classmates, anyone else.

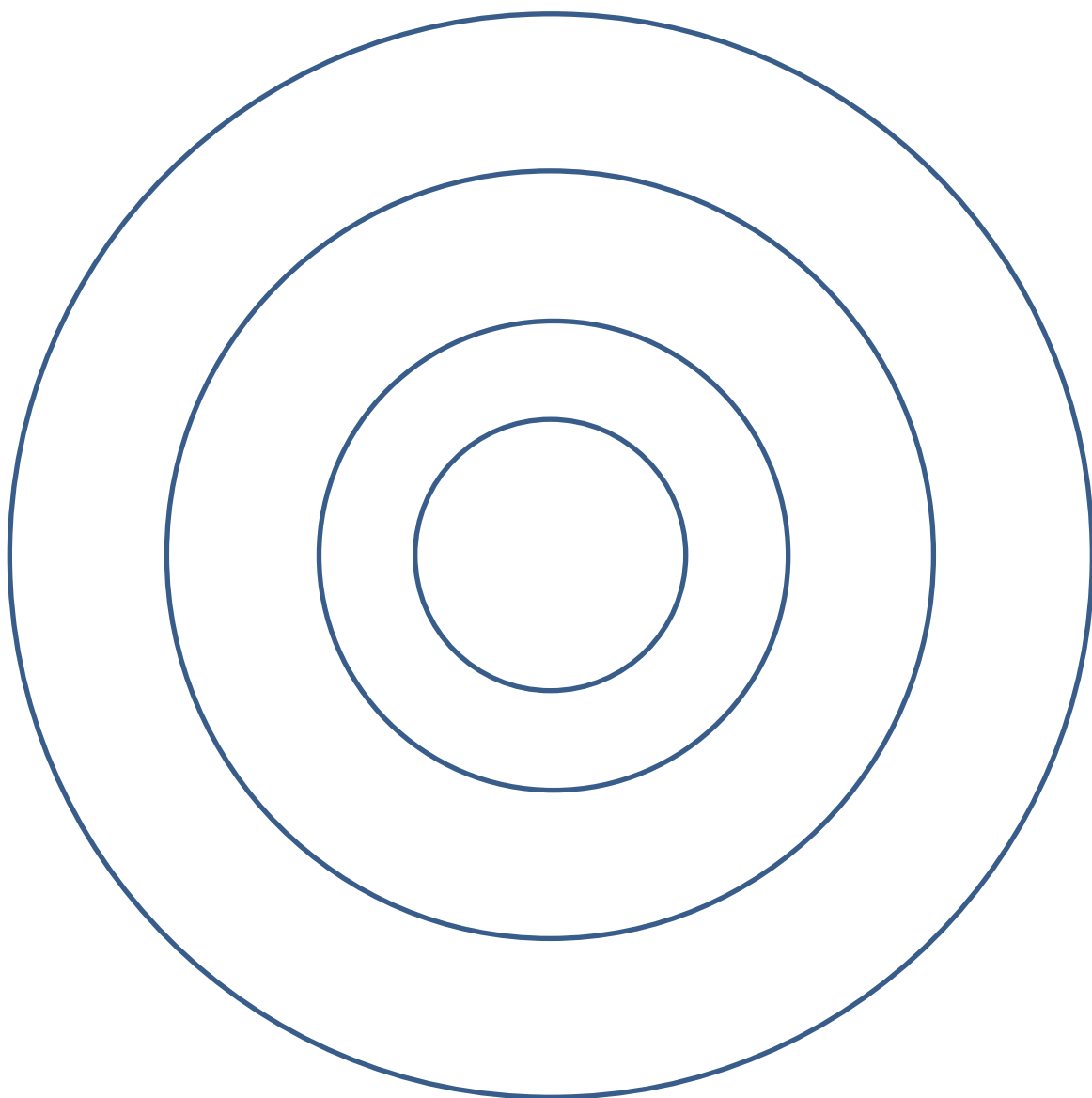
After Ambassadors have generated these examples, encourage two different Ambassadors to come to the chart. Using a **blue** marker, invite the new scribes to begin writing examples from the group of what could be said or done in the **red** situations to intervene.\*

\*It is important that the leader emphasize the subtle ways Ambassadors can intervene, that it doesn't have to be big, obvious, visible interventions that the whole school notices. Just saying hi to someone you notice is often a target, or inviting them to join you at lunch, can be the most powerful Ambassador Action.

Prompt the group to come up with multiple examples of Ambassador Actions for each situation in **red**, to encourage a deep understanding of all the different ways they can be Ambassadors.

**Extension:** Hand Ambassadors copies of the "With Whom Do You Start Worksheet". As they go through the week, they should mark an "X" in the appropriate ring as they intervene. They will mark an "O" if they saw something but did not intervene. At the next meeting, discuss what each person saw and the reasons that they may or may not have intervened.

## With Whom Do You Start Worksheet



MIDDLE / HIGH

### Instructions:

1. From now until the next Family Group Meeting, mark an "X" in the circles of who you intervened with, i.e. self, friends and family, classmates, others. Mark an "O" for the times you noticed mistreatment but didn't intervene.
2. Use the back of this sheet or next to your "O" to write notes about mistreatment you didn't intervene on in order to brainstorm at your next Family Group meeting how you might be able to intervene in the future.

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**Goal: Review the types of mistreatment**

**Prep:**

1. Gather the flipcharts with post-it examples of mistreatment that were saved from the SSA training.
2. If flipcharts weren't saved, recreate a flipchart with the 5 types of mistreatment (see example below) and gather extra blank post-it notes.

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 5 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance (can be taken during the game).
- If not done in previous meeting, collect and discuss completed Action Logs and provide to Program Advisor.
- **Initiate** a game of Word Association, see directions attached.

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 15 min.**

- Check-in with your Ambassadors around the With Whom Do You Start Worksheet from meeting #4: *"How was that? What did you notice about mistreatment you saw? Did you feel prepared to intervene? If so, which 'ring' or group of people did you feel most prepared to intervene with? What were some examples of what you said? What could you have said?"*
- **Skill Development**: Noticing Types of Mistreatment. See directions attached.
  - This skill is used to help develop students supporting.

**Closing – 7 min.**

- Bring meeting to a close by engaging students in a round of My Future Self, see directions attached.

## Word Association

Materials: None

Timing: 5 minutes

Preparation: None

Bring all your Ambassadors into a circle. A student or adult leader can start this icebreaker activity by saying any noun; the name of a person, place, or thing.

Everyone then goes around taking turns saying associated words.

For example:

Leader: "hotel"

Ambassador 1: "bed"

Ambassador 2: "room"

Ambassador 3: "service"

Ambassador 4: "food"

Ambassador 5: "pizza"

## My Future Self

Materials: None

Timing: 5 minutes

Preparation: None

This activity is to help students see past the immediate.

In a closing circle, instruct students to complete the sentence "Something my future self would tell me now is..."

MIDDLE / HIGH



## Noticing Types of Mistreatment

**Materials:** Post-it flip chart from training (if saved) and additional post-its.

**Timing:** 15 minutes

**Preparation:** If needed, re-create a flipchart with the 5 Types of Mistreatment

If saved from the training, bring out the flip charts with the post-it note examples of mistreatment that have been witnessed on your campus. If this was not saved from the training, encourage students to recreate a flipchart (see below) with post-it examples of mistreatment they have seen in the past month at school, categorized into the 5 different types of mistreatment.

### 5 Types of Mistreatment

Put-downs
Exclusion
Intimidation
Unwanted physical contact
Acts against campus

If using the flipcharts from the training, encourage each Ambassador to add 2-3 post-its of mistreatment that they have noticed since the training. Ask your group which type is most common on your campus.

Engage the group in a short discussion on this question: Why do people act this way? This part can be done:

- popcorn style (anyone speaks when they have something to say).
- pairs brainstorm & list, then report out & discuss as large group.

Consider:

- The role of media: what passes for humor on TV?
- What's "cool" in pop culture? Why is it cool to act this way (mean/cruel)?
- How do pop culture figures influence us? Name some/give examples.
- Family patterns: what Dad does to Mom, what your parents' parents did to them, older brother to younger brother, etc.
- Hurt people hurt people; we often don't know how someone else might be feeling or going through unless we ask them, and truly listen.

**Extension:** Listen to a song, read a story, or show a movie in which some characters mistreat others. Ask Ambassadors to NOTICE types of mistreatment and discuss afterward.

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**Goal: Practice “Balancing”**

**Prep:**

1. Prepare various ‘put-downs’ attached by cutting them into strips. You will need to have at least 2 put-downs per participant.
2. Put these ‘put-downs’ in a small box, hat, or bag.

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 5 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance (can be taken during the game).
- Play a round of Close Your Eyes and Balance, see directions attached.

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 15 min.**

- Discuss the Ambassador act of Balancing – saying something positive about a person or a group that was put down.
- Ambassadors each pick a slip of paper from the hat and within groups of 3, act out a short scene that shows a put-down and then the act of balancing.
- Follow-up with a discussion using the following for guidance:
  1. Balancing comments do not need to be related to the put-down. Students can bring up different areas for balance. For example, ‘Lou is a terrible ball player’ can be balanced with ‘Well, he helped me with my homework, and he is really smart!’
  2. Often balancing seems so obvious, but when we practice it makes balancing second nature to us.
  3. Do the students think this activity helped them be more comfortable with Balancing? Have they used Balancing before?

MIDDLE / HIGH

**Closing – 7 min.**

- Bring the meeting to a close by gathering in a circle and pass a talking piece around having everyone answer:
  1. When was a time you felt you really did not fit in?
  2. When was a time you felt you really belonged to a group?

Put Downs  
To be used when practicing Balancing

He is wearing such an ugly shirt.
She acts like she is so popular, but nobody likes her.
Have you heard them talk in class? They sound so stupid.
Nobody wants him on their team in P.E. because he is so bad.
They think they are so cool, but everyone hates them.
She painted this portrait in art that was so ugly.
Have you seen him run in P.E.? He looks so stupid.
Why do you even hang out with them?
She acts like she is the teacher's personal assistant. It's so annoying.
Have you seen what he's wearing today? He looks like he's wearing his sister's pants.
Is she seriously talking to them? What does she think; that they might actually like her?
I heard she tried out for the play, and they didn't even give her a part as an extra.
I heard the band teacher told him to quit guitar because he is so bad.
He is in my math class, and he is so dumb.

MIDDLE / HIGH

## Close Your Eyes and Balance

Materials: None

Timing: 5 minutes

Preparation: Large open safe area

Gather the Ambassadors together. They can be in a circle or just randomly standing together.

Ask them to do the following:

- Close your eyes.
- With your eyes closed:
  - Stand on one foot
  - Extend your arms
  - Touch your nose

Then,

- Open your eyes.
- With your eyes open:
  - Stand on one foot
  - Extend your arms
  - Touch your nose

**Debrief:** Discuss if it was more difficult to do this with eyes open or closed. Why is that? How can we relate it to Balancing?

**Prep:**

- Get materials: masking tape (for opener), festive colored construction paper cut into strips, and stapler.

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 10 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance (can be taken during the game).
- **Facilitate** game of I Like People Who... (Maybe make it a holiday theme to celebrate the upcoming holiday season)

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 15 min.**

- Check in with your ambassadors.
- Get all the Ambassadors together in a circle to do the **Winter Hope Circle** activity.
  - TIP: for the three questions, put them on the board or on paper so that Ambassadors can see them when their turn comes.
  - Model the activity first, step into the center of the circle and choose a strip of paper to begin the chain. While in the center briefly share a sentence responding to each prompt and staple the paper together to begin the chain. You can either go in a circle or have students step forward to answer and add to the paper chain.

**Closing – 2 min.**

- Bring meeting to a close by reflecting on their courage as individuals and Ambassadors and re-affirm staying “linked” over the holidays.
  - Ask each Ambassador to say one word to describe how they are feeling.
- Thank the ambassadors and express how proud you are of them.

## I Like People Who...

### Materials:

Masking tape for each student

### Timing:

5 minutes

### Preparation:

Everyone stands shoulder to shoulder in a circle. Put down making tape at their feet

**Summary:** Ambassadors create a circle to learn what others like and to share their own thoughts and likes.

**Directions:** One person stands in the center of the circle and makes a statement that is true for them. Everyone else for whom the statement is also true must move to a new place in the circle. Whoever is left inside the circle without moving to a new placeholder becomes the next leader, choosing their own new statement.

**Debrief:** Discuss what was learned about their classmates and if they learned anything new

## Winter Hope Circle

### Materials:

Colored construction paper, cut into strips, and a stapler.

### Timing:

15 minutes

### Preparation:

Everyone gets into a circle; can be standing or seated, around a "fire pit"

**Summary:** Ambassadors create a paper chain, showing how we are all connected.

**Directions:** The winter season is traditionally a time for internal reflection about our lives and ourselves, providing a space for setting goal for ourselves in the future. Ask everyone to close their eyes and reflect on the following three statements: 1) a challenge they faced this year, 2) something they accomplished or are proud of, and 3) a hope/goal for next year.

**Debrief:** Discuss what was learned about their classmates and if they learned anything new

**SSA Family Group Agenda**  
**Length: 27 minutes**

Meeting #8

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**Goal: Practice “Supporting”**

**Prep:**

Gather index cards (enough for 2-3 per Ambassador) and markers or colored pencils.

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 10 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance (can be taken during the game).
- **Initiate** a game of Back-to-Back, see directions attached.

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 15 min.**

- Check-in with your Ambassadors: “How have you been doing since our last meeting?” “Any successes or challenges to share?”
- Check-in Activity: Today I Need... see directions attached.

**Closing – 2 min.**

- Bring the meeting to a close by asking students to go find someone in the room and tell them one thing you appreciate about them.

## Back-to-Back

Materials: None

Timing: 5-10 minutes

Preparation: None

Prompt Ambassadors to find someone in the room that has a similar hair color to them (or similar shirt/shorts/pant color). Make sure everyone has a partner. Have partners link arms. With arms linked, the pair must find a way to stand up.

Once the pair has successfully stood up, encourage them to find a new partner and try this again. Then find a third person and try this one final time.

**Debrief:** Ask Ambassadors to share what worked and what didn't work during this activity. "Did you have to change your strategy with the difference people you worked with?" "How did you accomplish your goal?"

Guide your Ambassadors towards recalling the Action of Supporting, and ask them how this activity relates. Discuss how different people need support in different ways, and part of being an Ambassador is to *notice* when someone needs support and *act* in a way that best supports that person.

MIDDLE / HIGH



## Today I Need...

Materials: Index cards and markers

Timing: 15-20 minutes

Preparation: None

Invite your Ambassadors to think of what they might need from their Family Group to support them. Ideas might include Patience, Space, Comfort, Laughter, Jokes, Hugs, Support, Feedback, Forgiveness, etc.

Encourage each Ambassador to pick a word, an index card, and markers and have fun creating a card for that word. Allow for creativity, but make sure the word is clear and readable for others.

After everyone has made one or two cards, and the group feels that all the various needs have been written down, ask for all the cards to be spread out on a table, visible to everyone. Invite each person to take a card that they feel they currently need and share with a partner why they choose that card.

**Extension:** If time allows, initiate a circle round with each person sharing what card they picked and why. In a second round, ask Ambassadors to share how they think they could use this activity to support their larger school community.

Ideas include:

- Putting up "Today I Need..." posters on hallway bulletin boards with removable post-it notes or tabs for students to take what they need
- Sharing this activity with friends, and encouraging them to think about what they might need for support from their Ambassador friends.
- Posting a picture of the Support cards online and giving an open-invitation for people to reach out with what they need.

---

**Goal: Practice “Reasoning”**

**Prep:**

For Screaming Toes, have a large area where it is ok to scream loudly.

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 10 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance (can be taken during the game).
- **Initiate** an opening activity of Proud Whip, directions attached.

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 15 min.**

- Check in with your Ambassadors, “How is everything going?” “Any successes or challenges to share from the week?”
- Initiate a Reasoning Skill Development activity of Elevator Pitch, see directions attached.

**Closing – 2 min.**

- Bring meeting to a close by a high energy game of Screaming Toes, see directions attached.

## Proud Whip

Materials: None

Timing: 5-10 minutes

Preparation: None

In a circle, each person in succession quickly states, "I am proud that I \_\_\_\_\_." and fills in the blank with regard to being an Ambassador, i.e., I am proud that I stopped my friends from spreading a bad rumor about someone online). Then the next person speaks.

By doing several rounds, the group members can examine and disclose their thoughts to varying degrees. The third round might include something from any part of their lives.

**Extension:** After several rounds, it can be powerful to ask each person to address one other person in the group and tell that person something about them that you are proud of. Use the First Person and speak directly to the person (i.e., "Maria, I am proud of you for telling the truth about your feelings when you confronted your friends") rather than speaking about the person as if she was not there (e.g., "I'm proud of Maria because she told them \_\_\_\_\_").

## Screaming Toes

Materials: None

Timing: 2 minutes

Preparation: None

Invite all students to stand in a tight circle, with their heads down looking at their shoes.

Choose one person to be outside the circle in the roll of caller. When this person yells, "Heads Up!", everyone looks up and stares at someone else in the circle.

If that person is staring right back at you, then you both scream very loudly and step out of the circle. If the person you're looking at is not looking at you, put your head back down and wait for the next round.

Keep going until there are two players remaining.

## Elevator Pitch

Materials: None

Timing: 15 minutes

Preparation: None

In this activity, Ambassadors will work with partners to practice critical thinking, fast processing, and quick verbalizing as it pertains to talking someone out of doing something bad.

In the time it takes to ride an elevator, (30-60 seconds), students are to deliver a response to their partner's statement of intent to mistreat or harm someone.

Invite students to find a partner in the room and choose who will be "A" and who will be "B." The "A" will start first, by saying one of the following statements to their "B" partner:

- I'm going to take that freshman's clothes from the locker room
- Her phone is just sitting there, let's grab it and freak her out
- I'm going to take his backpack and see how long he looks for it
- If that teacher calls me out again, I'm going to throw my desk at him

Encourage students to imagine they are in an elevator and only have 30-60 seconds to convince this person to change their mind. "What would motivate this person to not do the thing they are planning on doing?" "What's important to them?" "Remember, you only have a max of 60 seconds to change their mind, so be compelling!"

After 60 seconds, tell students to switch and practice with the "B's" sharing what they are going to do and the "A's" giving the Elevator Pitch.

**Debrief:** How did it go? Did your partner convince you? How or how not? Do you feel like you could use this Ambassador Action with your friends? Why or why not?

---

**Goal: Practice “Distracting”**

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 10 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance (can be taken during the game).
- **Initiate** a game of I Like People Who...

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 15 min.**

- Check in with your Ambassadors, “How is everything going?” “Any successes or challenges to share from the week?”
- Distracting Skill Development activity. Divide your family group into groups of 4-5. Give a situation (put down, intimidation or non-intense unwanted physical contact) to each group. Have each group role play the mistreatment and what an Ambassador could do to distract. It’s okay for groups to add another action after the distraction (Supporting, Balancing, Reasoning) but ensure the intervention begins with Distracting. Ask the other groups (that are watching) what else they could say or do in this situation.

MIDDLE / HIGH

**Closing – 2 min.**

- Bring meeting to a close by asking Ambassadors to set a goal for how many times they can use the Distracting Action in the next week.

# I like People Who

## Materials:

None

## Timing:

10 minutes

## Preparation:

Everyone stands in a circle

**Directions:** Choose 1 student to be the starter. The starter stands in the middle of the circle and says “I like people who: \_\_\_\_\_” and fills in the blank with something that’s true about them.

For example: “I like people who play basketball, or hate green vegetables, or had a rumor started about them, or put up a put down.”

If it’s true about anyone in the circle they will have to move to a new spot in the circle. The last player to find a spot is the new starter.

(It’s sometimes beneficial to have the group leader choose who the next starter will be).

---

**Goal: Practice “Directing”**

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 10 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance (can be taken during the game).
- **Initiate** a game of Human Knot

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 15 min.**

- Check in with your Ambassadors, “How is everything going?” “Any successes or challenges to share from the week?”
- Directing Skill Development activity. Review the Directing action in the **Student Guidebooks**.
- Divide your family group into groups of 4-5. Give a situation (put down, intimidation or unwanted physical contact) to each group. Have each group role play the mistreatment and what an Ambassador could do to direct. At the end of each role-play have the group practice a graceful exit as if the aggressor did not respond well to the directing action.

MIDDLE / HIGH

**Closing – 2 min.**

- Bring the meeting to a close by discussing with the Ambassadors if they feel comfortable using the Directing action and why or why not.

# Human Knot

Materials:

None

Timing:

10 minutes

Preparation:

Everyone stands shoulder to shoulder in a circle

**Summary:** Ambassadors create a human knot by holding hands and work together to untangle themselves. This activity is useful for demonstrating the importance of trust and cooperation in group problem solving.

**Directions:** Everyone reaches both hands into the circle, and grasps the hands of TWO other people who are not directly next to them. The challenge is for the group to untie the knot (i.e., form a circle again, holding hands) without letting go of hands.

**Debrief:** Talk about what was helpful and what wasn't helpful, communication that worked or didn't work, and leaders that arose, etc. in accomplishing the task.

MIDDLE / HIGH



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**Goal: Practice “Active Listening”**

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 10 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance.
- **Initiate** a game of The Complete Picture

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 15 min.**

- Check in with your Ambassadors, “How is everything going?” “Any successes or challenges to share from the week?”
- Active Listening Skill Development activity. Review the Active Listening action in the **Student Guidebooks**. Facilitate a discussion on what active listening is and how it can be utilized as an Ambassador Action.
- Divide your family group into groups of 4-5. Give a situation of mistreatment to each group. Have each group role play the mistreatment and what an Ambassador could do to Actively Listen to either the Target or the Aggressor. The Ambassadors do not have to show what a complete conversation would look like, have them focus on how to initiate the conversation.
- Debrief each role-play as a group.
- Discuss what to do if someone discloses something that is too big for the Ambassador to handle (abuse, self-harm, etc.).

**Closing – 2 min.**

- Bring the meeting to a close by having each Ambassadors share one word of appreciation for the group.

# The Complete Picture

## Materials:

Paper and pencil or pen

## Timing:

5-10 minutes

## Preparation:

None

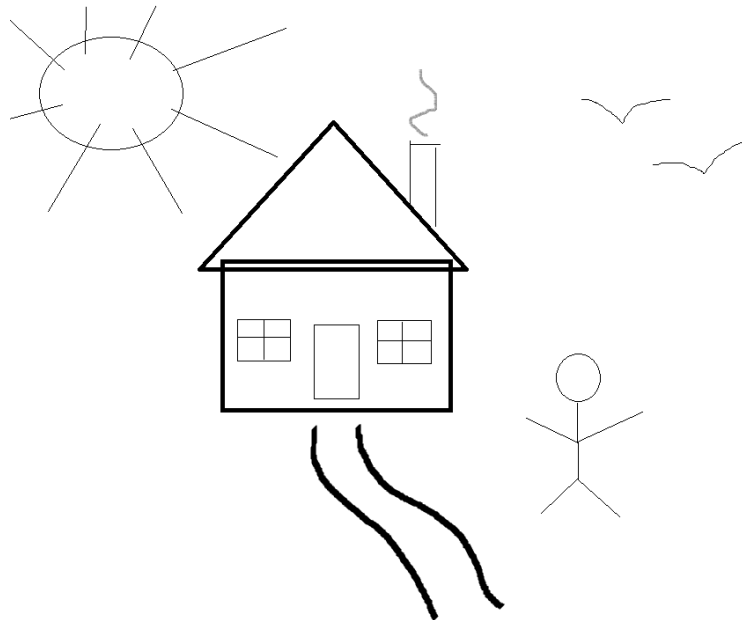
## **Directions:**

- Have Ambassadors pair off. Ambassadors sit back to back; one partner faces the front of the room and the other faces the back.
- An adult draws a simple picture at the front of the room (for example a simple house with stick figures).
- As you draw the picture the Ambassador who is facing the front describes the picture to their partner.
- The Ambassador facing the back, attempts to draw the picture based on their partner's description. They are not allowed to ask clarifying questions.
- If time allows, have the partners switch roles and repeat the activity, however the drawer can ask clarifying questions.

**Debrief:** Talk about the importance of listening and how we can draw a more complete picture if we use active listening skills.

MIDDLE / HIGH

Example of simple picture:



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**Goal: Wrap up Ambassador Skills**

**Prep: 15 Minutes in Advance:**

Get the “Jeopardy” board from the tool kit website and get familiar with the PowerPoint.

- Or you can write up “Jeopardy” board (see directions and example attached)
  - Suggestion: Ask a few students to help

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 2 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and taking attendance (can be taken during the game).

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 20 min.**

- As a wrap up for the Skills Development: Play another round of Ambassador “Jeopardy”, see directions attached.
  - Can change the questions if you want to challenge them more
  - Prebuilt power point deck:
    - <https://tools.community-matters.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2023/03/FGF-Ambassador-Jeopardy.pptx>
  - Suggestion: Have students lead this activity

**Closing - 5 min.**

- Bring meeting to a close by inviting students to share one word they have taken away from the skills development and a sentence about a skill they used recently.

## Ambassador “Jeopardy”

Materials: White board, marker, list of questions (see below)

Timing: 20 minutes

Preparation: Set up the white board with five columns (categories) and five rows. Put name of category at the top of each row. In each column starting in the first box, write 100. In the next box down, write 200, etc. up to 500.

You will need a list of questions (see below) for each category with the questions becoming increasingly more difficult as the point value increases. You will need a total of 25 questions (5 from each category).

Sample Board:

Targets, Aggressors, and Bystanders	Mistreatment and Cruelty	Ambassador Job	PREMO (Thinking about the situation)	Getting Help
100	100	100	100	100
200	200	200	200	200
300	300	300	300	300
400	400	400	400	400
500	500	500	500	500

Divide your Ambassadors into three teams. Have the team determine the order in which they will answer questions (e.g., Susie, then Bobby, then...).

Pick a spot in the room for the “contestants” to stand and then have the first students from each team stand together. Choose one team to start. That person chooses the category and amount. Read the question for that box. Contestants raise their hands if they know the answer. Choose the contestant that raised their hand first. If they get it right, their group gets the points listed in the square, if they get it wrong, their group gets negative points. Then call up the next three contestants. The winning group gets to pick the next category and amount. Continue until you have covered all of the boxes.

### Debrief:

You can ask the group who the winner is, and eventually the group or you will share that the true winner is the school, receiving the benefit of the Ambassadors’ knowledge and dedication.

## Ambassador “Jeopardy”

<b>Targets, Aggressors, and Bystanders</b>	<b>Mistreatment and Cruelty</b>	<b>Ambassador Job</b>	<b>PREMO (Thinking about the situation)</b>	<b>Getting Help</b>
What do you call the person who gets hurt? <i>(target)</i>	With what type of mistreatment does the target feel left out? <i>(exclusion)</i>	As an Ambassador, you must first ____ acts of mistreatment. <i>(notice)</i>	What does the “P” in PREMO stand for? <i>(What is the Problem?)</i>	Name 1 situation where you should get help from an adult.
What do you call the person who does the hurting? <i>(aggressor)</i>	With what type of mistreatment does the target get their feelings hurt? <i>(put downs)</i>	After you notice something and before you act, you must stop and _____. <i>(think)</i>	What does the “R” in PREMO stand for? <i>(What is my Relationship to the people involved?)</i>	Name 1 (a different) situation where you should get help from an adult.
What do you call the people who watch the hurting? <i>(bystanders)</i>	When intimidation happens, the target feels...? <i>(afraid)</i>	After you act, you should _____. <i>(follow through)</i>	What does the “E” in PREMO stand for? <i>(Environment – Who’s Around?)</i>	Name 1 reason why it might be hard to come forward.
When using the Action of Supporting, who do you usually talk to (target, aggressor or bystander?) <i>(target)</i>	Acts against campus affect who? <i>(everyone)</i>	With whom do you start doing your job first? <i>(self)</i>	What does the “M” in PREMO stand for? <i>(What’s my Mood?)</i>	Name 1 reason why it is a good idea to get help.
When using the action of Reasoning, who do you talk to? <i>(aggressor)</i>	Physical mistreatment or violence involves unwanted what? <i>(contact)</i>	Why is it risky to start with people that you hardly know at all? <i>(they might not listen, get mad, etc.)</i>	What does the “O” in PREMO stand for? <i>(What are my Options?)</i>	Name 1 adult that you could go to for help.

\*Preloaded slides on Program toolkit website

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**Goal: Start Action Snapshot Campaign**

**Prep:**

Prepare copies of Action Logs.

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 7 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance (can be taken during the game).
- **Initiate** a game of Count 1-10

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 15 min.**

- Reintroduce the Ambassadors to the Action Logs and explain the importance of Data Collection/Action Snapshot Campaigns. Explain that during the campaign, Ambassadors will be expected to record each of their interventions using the Action Logs.
- Have Ambassadors roleplay an example of mistreatment and an Ambassador Action (intervention) and then fill out an Action Log together.
- Give each Ambassador several copies of the Action Logs and let them know where they can get more. Ask them to fill out Action Logs until the next FG meeting when they will be turning in the completed Action Logs.

**Closing – 5 min.**

- Bring the meeting to a close by gathering in a circle and pass a talking piece around having everyone answer:  
“Give a compliment to someone for something they did well this week.”

## Count 1-10

Materials:

None

Timing:

5 minutes

Preparation:

Group stands in a large circle.

**Summary:** This is a focusing activity that supports a group in dropping in together and re-gaining focus.

**Directions:** With students standing in a circle, prompt participants to try to count aloud from 1 to 10 as a group one person at a time. If two people say the same number at the same time, the whole group must start over.

Do not allow students to indicate who will speak next or speak in any order.

Eventually, participants will be tuning into each other very closely to try to perceive if someone is about to speak. If the group is masterful at this, encourage them to close their eyes and try again.

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**Goal: Wrap Up**

**Prep:**

- Print out Ambassador Actions

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 10 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance (can be taken during the game).
- **Initiate** a game of Back-to-Back.

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 15 min.**

- Check in with your Ambassadors, “How is everything going?” “Any successes or challenges to share from the week?”
- Pass out the Ambassador Actions worksheet and have students work on filling it out.
- Once done, go around and have students popcorn read an answer.
  - You start by saying the #1 then popcorn to a student, they read their answer to #1, and then popcorn #2 to another student, etc.

**Closing – 2 min.**

- Bring the meeting to a close by thanking everyone and reminding them to use an Ambassador skill this week.



## Back-to-Back

Materials: None

Timing: 5-10 minutes

Preparation: None

Prompt Ambassadors to find someone in the room that has a similar hair color to them (or similar shirt/shorts/pant color). Make sure everyone has a partner. Have partners link arms. With arms linked, the pair must find a way to stand up.

Once the pair has successfully stood up, encourage them to find a new partner and try this again. Then find a third person and try this one final time.

**Debrief:** Ask Ambassadors to share what worked and what didn't work during this activity. "Did you have to change your strategy with the difference people you worked with?" "How did you accomplish your goal?"

Guide your Ambassadors towards recalling the Action of Supporting, and ask them how this activity relates. Discuss how different people need support in different ways, and part of being an Ambassador is to *notice* when someone needs support and *act* in a way that best supports that person.

## Ambassador Actions:

1. How could you support a person who just got called a bad name?

2. What does it mean to distract?

3a. When you are reasoning with someone, you are trying to \_\_\_\_\_.

3b. Please write an example of how you could use reasoning at your school:

4. To make your directing more effective, what can you say & do before you actually ask the person to stop or change what they're doing?

- 
- 

5. If you begin to do an Action to help out, but the person you are trying to help gets upset with you, so you decide to exit, what would you . . .

Do:

Say:

6. Name one Ambassador Action that involves using the help that's available from people like counselors, teachers, or other adults whom you trust?

Give a brief example how you might use that Action at your school.

7. Why do you want to be an Ambassador?

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**Goal: Highlight their work as Ambassadors**

**Prep:**

- Get video supplies.
  - Can use a camera (or phone if you don't have access to a camera)

**Meeting Agenda:**

**Welcome and Opening Activity – 1 min.**

- Begin by welcoming everyone and take attendance.

**Activity and Ambassador Skill Development – 20 min.**

- Check-in with your Ambassadors
- **Facilitate** the Ambassador video - 2 minutes max.
  - Have students come up with a script showing what they are learning and how to be a good ambassador.
    - It can be a scenario, a play, a conversation, etc. –Make it Fun!
  - EX: the group can create and act out the example of mistreatment and what that they think they could do or say to make it better.
    - Validate that there are many possibilities (and Actions) for each situation and that they will need to experiment with what works best.
  - Video script – 2 minutes max!
    - Send to CM when finished.

**Closing – 5 min.**

- Close the meeting by playing a few rounds of Screaming toes.
- Bring the meeting to a close by thanking the ambassadors and wishing them good luck. Give a Round of applause to the Ambassadors as its your last meeting!

## Screaming Toes

Materials: None

Timing: 2 minutes

Preparation: None

Invite all students to stand in a tight circle, with their heads down looking at their shoes.

Choose one person to be outside the circle in the roll of caller. When this person yells, "Heads Up!", everyone looks up and stares at someone else in the circle.

If that person is staring right back at you, then you both scream very loudly and step out of the circle. If the person you're looking at is not looking at you, put your head back down and wait for the next round.

Keep going until there are two players remaining.

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## APPENDIX

### The 10 Points of Logic Behind the SSA Program

The Safe School Ambassadors program is built on a solid foundation of research and over nineteen years of field experience (*since 1999*).

**1) SSA is a student-centered program.** Students see, hear, and know things adults don't. They are everywhere mistreatment happens, whereas adults aren't, and students can intervene in ways adults can't. Therefore, adults need to share power and decision-making with Ambassadors. For example, don't just decide how you'll recognize and appreciate them, rather, find out from them what would be meaningful and appreciated and use that information in your decision-making. To the extent practical and age appropriate, involve Ambassadors in running the program and Family Groups: taking attendance, conducting opening and check-in activities, tallying Action Logs and completing Action Log Summaries, planning all-Ambassador meetings, etc.

**2) The focus of the program is on reducing incidents of peer mistreatment.** The reduction of incidents of mistreatment in turn leads to a decrease in discipline incidents (detentions, suspensions, etc.) and an improvement in school climate. Better school climate means increased attendance and improved academic performance. However, this change takes time. Most programs require three years of diligent implementation to become firmly ingrained in the school system (i.e., sustainable) and have the desired impact on the campus' social norms.

**3) SSA utilizes the bystanders.** It is not a program to fix bullies or aggressors. It is not a program to give targets more tools to fend off or cope with the mistreatment they experience. It *IS* a program that harnesses the power of the bystanders, whose silence or acquiescence in the face of mistreatment "permits" it to happen. But SSA does not involve just any bystanders, nor does it try to directly reach all of the bystanders at a given school. It carefully and precisely identifies, orients, and selects the socially influential "opinion leaders" of the school's diverse groups and cliques.

**4) Ambassadors are socially-influential leaders.** Studies have shown that just having empathy and skills is not enough for a student to speak up to stop mistreatment or to do so effectively. Students with high social capital are more likely to **USE** their skills, and when they do, they are more likely to be followed. While all students can benefit from certain components of the SSA training – building relationships with peers in different social circles and understanding the extent and costs of the problem of mistreatment – only some have the courage and social capital (stature and influence in the eyes of their peers) to be effective Ambassadors.

**5) Younger grades (i.e., K – 3) are not trained to be Ambassadors.** Students at this age are still developing the communication and social skills that are the foundation of this program. Developmentally, they may also have limited understanding of the subtleties of mistreatment, so it is hard for them to determine when to intervene. We believe that resources are better devoted to helping K-3 students develop an appreciation for diversity and learning basic communication and friendship skills.

**6) Ambassadors do not just focus on bullying and violence.** The SSA program helps Ambassadors notice – and then act to prevent or stop – a broad spectrum of peer mistreatment: exclusion, put-downs, relational aggression, and sexual harassment, in addition to bullying and violence. These less-visible forms of mistreatment often escalate into incidents that trigger an adult response and disciplinary action.

**7) Ambassadors work mostly with their friends.** They have the greatest influence on the people they know well and are much less likely to be accosted or experience any harm from those close to them. Since they have been recruited from the diverse cliques on campus, they can have significant impact simply by working with those close to them.

**8) Ambassadors are generally not very visible.** Many Ambassadors feel that they are more effective and influential when their friends don't know or forget that they are Ambassadors. Ambassadors use their relational power to prevent and stop mistreatment rather than any positional power that might be bestowed by a t-shirt or badge or visible designation as a mediator.

**9) Ambassadors need supervision and support.** Any person who learns new skills and tries to use them in challenging circumstances needs regular opportunities to:

- discuss her/his experiences with others who understand,
- sharpen those skills through practice and coaching from peers and mentors, and
- receive meaningful recognition and appreciation for their courage and commitment.

**10) Regular assessment of Ambassador activity and program impact is essential.** Building a broad and sustainable base of institutional support requires demonstrating to administrators and staff that the SSA program has made an impact. Therefore, it is critical to collect data that shows measurable changes, such as a reduction in office referrals or other disciplinary indicators, and the relationship to student interventions, such as those captured in Action Logs. These reports are best when enriched by stories of actual interventions as told or demonstrated by Ambassadors themselves.

## 10 Tips for Facilitating a Learning Group

***"The better facilitator you become, the fewer words you will have to use."***  
**Geoff Ball**

As you guide your Family Group through its ever-repeating process of forming, storming, forming, and performing, and provide the required task and maintenance functions necessary for them to do such reflection upon their experiences, we encourage you to integrate the following principles into your practice:

- 1) **Comfort** - an uncomfortable group will be more easily distracted. Get comfortable. Use chairs. Take breaks for bathroom and food. Move and stretch; play active games for energizers.
- 2) **Beware Expectations** - Consider this: If I have an expectation in mind, it usually gets fulfilled. If I have certain expectations in mind for the group, I deprive it of the possibility of achieving something completely new from our experience together.
- 3) **Read the group** – notice the cues they offer you. Respond to their current place, and their needs. Be flexible & responsive.
- 4) **Set the Tone** - with your own words of introduction ("We have a great opportunity to ..."), with a game or exercise (like a Trust Lift), with props like a talking stick or candle, or with guided imagery ("Imagine that your week since our last meeting was videotaped. Rewind the tape. Now play it on the big movie screen in your mind.") Then verbally guide participants to recall their week's major activities, and the feelings they experienced – this helps put the preceding class period in context and brings to the surface material for discussion.
- 5) **Ask Open-Ended Questions** – A facilitator is a catalyst and mirror, not a person who necessarily provides the answers. A facilitator leads a process of guided discovery, leading out of participants what is inside of them, so they can articulate their own observations and find their own answers.
- 6) **Know when to intervene:**
  - to enforce ground rules / prevent injury / preserve safety - to take advantage of teachable moments. Ambassadors' discussions will inevitably unearth concepts that present learning opportunities and warrant being highlighted for the group.
  - to adjust frustration level. If the group gets frustrated trying to solve a problem or come to agreement, you may wish to stop the discussion and ask a question or two to reframe the perceived problem.
- 7) **Change** - If it doesn't work, try something else. Do what works. Experiment to find the best ways of doing things. When what you said didn't produce the intended result:
  - take a breath and remember that their response is right, for them, always
  - live with the silence (if you think that seeds are being planted . . .)
  - ask them what the silence means
  - use humor: "I thought I used English but let me try again."

- rephrase what you said
- try approaching the issue from another angle: Instead of "What did you learn from that intervention?" Try "What is one thing you noticed happen between the people you confronted?"
- move on to a different topic
- try an activity

8) **Avoid passing judgment.** When asked "How did I do?", you might first ask the person to discuss how they might answer that question. But it's also important to avoid being so aloof that group members cannot discern your true feelings/thoughts and establish personal rapport with you.

9) **Confront destructive patterns** – you are not here to support participants' destructive and unfulfilling habits. At times you must confront firmly, but gently and with the utmost professionalism, sharing your observations about behavior, attitudes and their effects.

10) **Resistance** - Not every person in every group will be excited about the SSA program, or about discussing their thoughts and feelings relative to it. Some may actively resist participation, and some of your efforts might even help them resist more. General guidelines for handling resistance are:

- love, which does not mean liking what a person is saying or doing;
- honor that they too are human;
- accept that they are acting as they are for reasons that are very valid to them;
- get more information: "I am clear that you do not want to be here; why did you show up?" A reply of "I had to" is an opportunity to discuss the other situations where this person is being "forced" to do things by others, which can lead to what they really do like & want to do, which in turn leads to what they can do with today's opportunities;
- do not bother trying to "convince" a person to do something, just offer opportunities, acceptance and love. What *can* you do here in this situation? What can you offer us?
- stop sabotage firmly: resistance does not deserve to ruin the program for others;
- adhere to your own professional or personal principles, never compromise them.

The Family Group meeting is not meant to be a place to provide therapy. If an Ambassador is in crisis, confidentially discuss the situation with your Program Advisor to determine the most helpful course of action. Refer Ambassadors to more qualified people when their needs or the discussion itself exceeds the bounds of your knowledge.



## Basic Stages of Group Development

Putting Ambassadors into groups – Family Groups – creates tremendous opportunities for learning, growth, and the satisfaction of basic developmental needs like belonging.

It also sets in motion a process that all groups are known to go through. While there are many variants on this basic pattern, knowing it – and knowing what stage your group is at – will help you determine the questions and activities you'll use to help your Family Group accomplish its purposes.

This group or team development model is based on the pioneering work of Bruce W. Tuckman, conducted in the 1950s, and first published as "Developmental Sequence in Small Groups" in *Psychological Bulletin*, 1955. Tuckman identified four predictable stages of group development.

1) **Forming** – when a group is first formed, members make a transition from status as individuals to being group members also. They are figuring out if they really want to belong, and how the group can serve them. They cautiously explore the boundaries of acceptable group behavior and test the leader's guidance formally and informally.

Members might feel:

- excitement, anticipation, and optimism
- pride in being chosen to participate in the program
- tentative attachment to the group
- anxiety and fear about what's ahead

Leaders can: encourage members to be more honest and “real,” to get to know each other better and go deeper.

2) **Storming** – when the initial "honeymoon" period ends and reality sets in, power struggles and conflicts may arise. Greater trust leads to greater honesty, and disagreement; members then need to learn how to work through these disagreements without breaking the group apart. In this stage, members tend to rely on the more familiar – i.e., their own personal expertise and experience – and resist the need to work with other group members. This is the hardest stage, and the one with the greatest potential for individual and collective growth.

Members might feel:

- resistance to the program, the leader, and the ideas of group members
- sharp fluctuations in attitude toward the group
- tension
- jealousy
- a sense of competition with other members, and a desire to "choose sides" or allies

Leaders can: remind members that conflict is normal and healthy; remind members about why they are here; remind them about Working Agreements; help them work through their differences by using good communication skills.

3) **Norming** – during this stage, group members reconcile competing loyalties and "buy in" to the group and the program on a deeper level. They accept the common ground rules, their role in the group, and the individuality of fellow members. It is as if they realize that they are not going to drown and thus stop thrashing about and start helping each other stay afloat!

Members might feel:

- acceptance of their own role, and accepted by others
- relief that everything seems like it will work out
- greater willingness to take risks and confide in each other and the group
- able to express feelings and ideas (e.g., criticism) in non-antagonistic ways
- a greater sense of belonging and loyalty to the group
- a greater sense of cohesion, common spirit, and goals

Leaders can: help members name and describe these norms and patterns and notice their progress.

4) **Performing** – in this stage, members can truly "work the program model" and begin supporting each other with limited prompting from the facilitator/leader. They have accepted each other's strengths and weaknesses and learned how to work together.

Members might feel:

- satisfaction with their personal progress, and that of the group
- co-ownership of the group identity
- close attachment to other group members

Groups begin to cycle through these stages when they are first brought together, and they go at their own unique pace. While the leader / facilitator can help the group and its members learn what they need to learn at each stage, it is not possible for anyone to get the group to "jump over" any stage.

**Note also that when a new member is brought in, or when a new task (e.g., a meeting) is faced, the group goes through these cycles again, but on a different and less dramatic level (because the change or new task is itself less dramatic).**